



IN CLASS ACTIVITY

Imaginary River Trip

Theme

Humans, animals, and plants use the river in a variety of ways.

Utah State Integrated Core Curriculum Topic

Standard Three: Students will develop and understanding of their environment.

Objective Two: Investigate water and interactions with water.

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Describe ways that people, plants and animals use water.
- State that many plants and animals live along rivers.

Time

30 minutes

Materials

Two long pieces of yarn; river gear including life jacket, hat, paddle, bail bucket, and water bottle; “Imaginary River Trip” slides; slide projector; extension cord.

Note

Before starting, lay out yarn in the shape of two rafts on the classroom floor in front of a screen. Set up slide projector and slides. Leave river gear out of sight of the students.

PROCEDURE

1) Introduce the topic of water by asking the students how they use water and how other people use water. Prompt them, as needed, to include a diversity of uses, such as drinking, cooking, washing, cooling off, farming, mining, gardening, growing lawns, and having fun. Tell students that some people like to have fun by going on river trips down the Green or Colorado River. Ask students if they would like to go on an imaginary river trip with you.

2) Grab the river gear and put on the hat and life jacket. Explain why you need each piece of gear for your trip (the paddle to move the boat, the hat to provide shade from the hot sun, water to drink, a bail bucket to get water out of the

boat after going through rapids, and a life jacket in case the boat flips or you get thrown out of the boat). Tell students that they’re all going to paddle on this trip, so they have to cooperate and listen carefully. Show them where their “boats” are and invite a few at a time to sit in the boats.

3) Start the slides and follow the script.

4) When students are back in their chairs, review the lesson. Make sure that they understand that plants, animals, and humans need water to survive. Discuss the uses of water that students observed along the river.

SLIDE**SCRIPT**

Boats on shore	Have students buckle and tighten their (imaginary) lifejackets before we pull away from shore.
Boats in water	Discuss with students why the boat is floating. What else might float in the river?
River	Here we go. It's a beautiful sunny day. The river's calm here. There are no rapids. Let's practice paddling together. (Show students how to paddle with their imaginary paddles and have them practice for a few seconds.)
Mallard Duck.....	Look, what's floating on the water? (duck) Why do you find ducks by the water? (food, safety)
Mule Deer	Look over on the shore. Why do you think that deer is here? Do you ever see deer in places other than by the river? (Yes, they are large animals and can walk a long distance to water.)
River	Where do you see most of the plants around here? (by the edge of the river) Yes! Let's paddle over to the side and take a closer look at those plants.
River, Shore	Keep paddling!
Closer Shore	
Beaver	Oh, look! What's that on the shore? Why does the beaver live here?
Tamarisk flowers.....	Look at the pink flowers. This tamarisk shrub makes a thicket. It needs a lot of water to grow. If its roots are not in wet sand, it will die.
Tamarisk thicket	
Ringtail.....	Oh, there's a ringtail! Has anyone ever seen one of them? They usually live by the water, too. Some ringtails have learned that people carry food and will sneak on boats pulled up to shore and steal it.
Willow	Here's a willow, another shrub that grows only by water. Lots of animals use willows.
Dragonfly	A Dragonfly! They live near the river because they lay their eggs in water.
River	
Cottonwood.....	Look up in the cottonwood tree. Do you think anyone lives there?
Porcupine	There's a porcupine. They eat plants and tree bark and go up into trees for protection. Since most of the trees around here are right next to the river, most of the porcupines are, too.

SLIDE**SCRIPT**

Great Blue Heron rookery	Look high up into those trees. Do you see those birds? Great Blue Herons live in groups and put their nests close to each other.
Great Blue Heron close-up	There's a great blue heron taking off from the shore. They hunt by standing very quietly in shallow water, watching without moving until a fish swims nearby and then quickly grabbing the fish with their sharp bill. Let's float closer along the shore.
Tracks, Shadow	There are some tracks. It looks like something that hops.
Toad	A toad! Can you make toad sounds?
River with sand bar	Do you think there might be more tracks along these sand bars?
Deer Tracks	There are some. Do you know what kind these are? (deer)
Mountain Lion Tracks	Mountain lion tracks! Do you think she was following the deer? There are many tracks here because all animals need water. Let's go downstream.
River	What's that roar? I think there's a rapid coming up. Everyone paddle!
Rapid Entry	Everyone hold on with your legs and keep paddling! Here we go!
Rapid	Whoa! Keep paddling! Did we lose anyone?
Calm River	Good job! Now it's time to bail. Heave ho! (Have students bail out the boat with their imaginary buckets. If the group is not too rowdy encourage them to have an imaginary water fight.) That's enough bailing. Now take a big drink of water. (Have students place their buckets back in the center of the boat and get their imaginary water bottles.) Remember, we need water just like the animals. We need lots of water on days when we're outside in the sun and working hard paddling.
Ancient Cliff Dwelling	Look up against the cliffs at the remains of some ancient stone buildings. The ancestors of the Indians who live here today built the houses about 1000 years ago. Why do you think they chose this place to live? (water)
Eagle	Look high against the cliffs. There's an eagle. Use your arms to soar like eagles. You often see eagles along river canyons because they build their nests on cliffs so coyotes or other animals can't get to them.
Fox	There's a fox. They eat lots of different things, including rabbits, mice, grasshoppers, fruits and berries. Sometimes you see them by the river drinking or looking for plants or animals to eat.
Boat on River Shore	Well, we're at the end of our trip. Everybody take off your life jackets, climb out of your boat, and go back to your chairs.